



Emergency Preparedness Guide

for Transit Employees ON THE JOB and AT HOME

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James S. Simpson

Federal Transit Administrator

Dear Colleagues,

The role and importance of public transportation in every community throughout this country is growing rapidly. Bus systems are upgrading equipment and moving more riders than ever before. Commuter rail lines are helping regions manage increasing traffic problems while new or expanding light rail and bus rapid transit systems are connecting cities and revitalizing neighborhoods.

The unfortunate events surrounding September 11th, a major power outage in the northeast, gulf-coast hurricanes, and wildfires in the west have also increased the awareness of public transportation's importance in a time of emergency. While you are not an "essential" employee in the traditional sense, such as police officers and firefighters, your role as a public transportation employee is still as vital during a crisis as it is during a normal rush-hour commute.

To help you better prepare yourself and your family to cope with an emergency while still allowing you to effectively fulfill your duties, the Federal Transit Administration and the National Transit Institute have prepared this guide. My hope is that you not only read, but truly embrace the suggestions in this guide, particularly those that apply to your own personnel preparedness. Recent history has reminded us that no region of our country is safe from all hazards and we all need to do what we can to ensure the safety of our families and loved ones.

I hope you find the information in this guide useful in helping you improve your preparedness both at home as well as at work. You are one of over 300,000 transit employees who are helping the country's public transit systems better serve their communities in times of calm and crisis.

Thank you for your enduring commitment to your customers, your transit system, and to the public transportation community. Through your individual efforts, the entire transit industry thrives.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James S. Simpson'.

James S. Simpson

Federal Transit Administrator



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WHAT YOUR JOB DEMANDS

Think about your responsibility as someone who serves the transportation needs of the public: the men, women and children of your community. While you're not a member of the police or fire department, your unique job requires you to be responsible for the safety and security of your customers and in some cases, the community at large.

In an emergency situation, you may not be free to go home right away to look after your family. As part of your public service, you may be obligated to ensure that your customers are given every opportunity to overcome the emergency situation safely and quickly. Your agency may also be an integral part of the community or region's emergency evacuation plan, requiring you to play a role in safely and efficiently moving people to shelters from flooded or other endangered areas.

By anticipating emergency situations and knowing how to deal with them, you'll be better prepared to serve your customers and the public. Just as important, you'll be prepared to protect the safety and security of your family while you are working. It goes without saying—emergency preparedness is important to you, your family, and your customers.

This Emergency Preparedness Guide is divided into two parts. Part I addresses emergency preparedness while on the job and Part II addresses emergency preparedness at home. The overall objectives are to help you learn how to:

- Protect yourself and assist your customers if disaster strikes
- Protect your family if you are at work
- Stock and maintain job and home preparedness kits

Even after you have become familiar with the contents of this guide, it may be useful for you to occasionally review the material and certain sections. The [Table of Contents](#) should help you to use this guide as a quick reference.



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THREE BASICS OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

1. Understand threats

Using resources such as your local Red Cross chapter, determine which types of natural or man-made disasters could strike your community, what seasons or time periods these events are most likely to occur, what destruction may result, and how it may impact your transit agency and/or home. Learn how to prepare for such events should they occur while at work or at home.



2. Stay informed

In the event of any disaster, be sure to listen to the radio and television, or use the internet for updated local information. You may also consider purchasing a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio if you live in areas prone to severe storms, tornadoes, or flooding.



3. Communicate clearly

Communication with internal and external agency sources is imperative during emergency situations. Understanding agency communication procedures, equipment usage, and response options is critical for reacting appropriately to emergencies. Additionally, having a family communication plan established will allow you to check in with family members for peace of mind and further response planning.



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ON THE JOB

Prepare for on the Job Emergencies

As a transit employee, you may have to stay on the job should an emergency or disaster strike. You should also make every effort to be involved, be alert and be prepared. The more involved, informed, alert and prepared you are prior to an emergency, the better you will be able to handle it.

Be Involved

Become knowledgeable about your structural surroundings; environmental conditions; and the location and operation of all exits, controls, communication equipment, and other safety features. Make sure your employer has the most current contact information for your family. Additionally, ask yourself the following questions concerning your job:

- “Am I considered ‘essential personnel’?”
- “Will I be able to leave my job immediately?”
- “Will I be able to adhere to my typical work schedule?”
- “Will I be required to work overtime?”
- “What are my other contractual obligations and what is expected of me at work in the event of an emergency situation?”

If you don't know the answers to these questions, it's extremely important that you ask your supervisor, union representative or other appropriate person about your responsibilities during an emergency and what you can do to prepare.

Be Alert

To prevent an emergency situation, report any damaged or malfunctioning equipment to your supervisor or control center. Also report anything that appears suspicious or out-of-place. Pay attention to weather reports and weather patterns in your region. Be on the lookout for severe weather conditions.

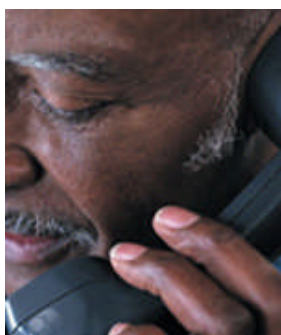
Be Prepared

Being prepared will help you to remain calm and properly manage an emergency situation when necessary.



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What to Do Before an Emergency Happens

- Understand your agency's emergency policies, protocols, and communication plan. Know how to operate emergency equipment as well as emergency and alternative communication devices in case main lines of communication are severed. Consider communication methods for those with visual, hearing, speech, or other impairments. For example, having paper and markers on hand can allow a vehicle operator to communicate with hearing-impaired customers.
- Stock and maintain an agency-supplied first-aid kit and any other emergency supplies for your customers.
- Have the following readily accessible for use in an emergency situation:
 - Checklist of procedures for notification
 - Current emergency contact information. Make yourself a small, wallet- sized index card of vital contact numbers
 - City, town, county and state highway maps
- Keep a personal emergency supplies kit close to your work station, if permitted by your agency (see On The Job Kit Checklist). Additionally, a fully charged cell phone and a battery-operated radio are key items to have on hand. Know which radio stations will provide emergency information for your area.
- Transit operators and drivers:
 - Bus and van drivers should learn alternate routes in the event your main route is impassable or obstructed.
 - Rail operators should be aware of your company's policies with regard to turning off traction power and emergency uncoupling of rail cars.



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What to Do During any Emergency

- Remember your priorities (#1 Protect Life, #2 Preserve Property, and #3 Maintain Service).
- Remain calm, stay patient and be prepared to make key decisions as quickly as possible.
- Provide a specific, yet concise, description of the situation to your transit control center. Inform them about the site conditions and health status of you and your customers.
- Listen for dispatchers' response and instructions and, if possible, listen to your radio for developing news.
- Inform and give customers clear directions during the early stages of the emergency. Continue to update them frequently throughout the event.
- Determine what emergency action is safest and then implement it: shelter-in-place, relocation, or evacuation.
- If evacuation is necessary, consider various factors including evacuation route, timing, special considerations required for elderly and/or customers with disabilities, and preferable exits to evacuate customers from the vehicle.
- Assist customers with physical and/or mental health conditions as well as the young and elderly, who may have difficulty following your directions and/or evacuation procedures.
- Provide first-aid treatment if you are trained and sanctioned by your agency to do so.
- Follow the advice and direction of local emergency officials.



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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Power Outages

Power outages are common events and result in the loss of artificial light and often a loss of heat and water. Most power outages are not in themselves emergency situations, because they are generally corrected in a matter of hours. However, when a power outage is a direct result of extreme weather or another type of disaster, be aware that power service may be down for an extended period of time. If you and your customers are caught in a power outage, understand and adhere to the following:



- Keep a flashlight with fresh batteries or a supply of snap-activated glow sticks on hand.
- Avoid open flames such as candles and kerosene lamps as a source of light.
- Be aware of secondary emergencies which may include the disruption of essential services, including medical support, and electrical surges and shorts due to the sudden resumption of service.

Transit Facilities:

- Turn off/unplug unprotected electrical devices to reduce power surge when electricity is restored.



Transit Vehicles:

- Rail: Stay inside.
- Rail: Use an alternative communication device to report your location and situation to the control center and wait for further instructions from the agency.
- Rail: Know evacuation procedures. Be aware of the location of emergency exits and evacuation routes.
- Bus and Van: Be prepared to experience congestion and additional safety hazards due to traffic signal outages or the closing of tunnels, bridges, and toll plazas.



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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Winter Storms/Blizzards

Heavy snow or blizzard conditions can include freezing rain, sleet, and high winds, and can cause significant damage and immobilize an entire area. Travel is often hazardous during such storms and medical conditions such as frostbite and hypothermia can be suffered by those exposed to such extreme weather. If you and your customers are caught in a blizzard or winter storm, adhere to the following:

- Stay inside!
- Keep dry.
- Light exercise, huddling together and added clothing layers help to maintain body heat.
- Avoid overexertion
- Eat and drink. Food provides the body with energy and heat. Fluids prevent dehydration.

Transit Facilities:

- If there is no heat, seal off unused rooms by stuffing towels or rags in cracks under doors and covering windows at night. Maintaining the facility heating system will help prevent heating system failures in such events.

Transit Vehicles:

- Stay with the vehicle.
- At night turn on vehicle interior lights so crews or rescuers can locate you.
- If stranded in a remote, rural area, spread a large cloth over the snow to attract attention of rescue personnel.
- Bus and Van: If you need to pull off the roadway, set your hazard lights to flash and remain in vehicle.
- Bus and Van: Run the engine and heater about ten minutes each hour to keep warm. While the engine is running, slightly open a window and keep the exhaust pipe free of snow to minimize carbon monoxide risk. Be careful not to run vehicle battery down.
- Rail: Utilize de-icing equipment. Keep third rail and switches ice-free.
- Rail: Check flange-ways at grade crossings or in-street running for snow and ice buildup.



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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Fires

Each year, approximately 4,000 Americans die and many more are injured in more than 1.5 million fires nationwide. Fires can spread rapidly. The leading cause of fire deaths is asphyxiation from heat and smoke. If you and your customers find yourselves endangered by fire, adhere to the following:

- Protect yourself and your customers by immediately evacuating the area.
- Report the fire as soon as you safely can. Explain where it is, its source if known, and the health status and location of you and your customers.
- Do not re-enter a structure or vehicle that is on fire or filled with smoke.
- Follow the instructions of emergency responders upon their arrival.

Transit Facilities:

- If safe, close windows and doors to contain the fire. Assist in evacuation.
- Know how to use a fire extinguisher and where they are located in order to extinguish small fires. Remember, life safety is your first priority.
- Evacuate the area first, before attempting to extinguish a fire. In most cases it is best to leave the firefighting to trained responders.

Transit Vehicles:

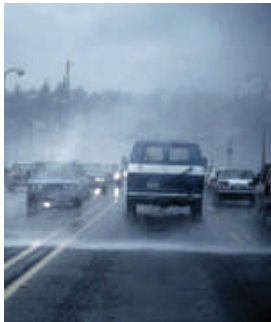
- It is wise under most circumstances to quickly evacuate your customers from the vehicle.
- Bus and Van: If able, steer the vehicle safely out of traffic. Leave the engine on until you have stopped completely, otherwise there is a chance that the steering wheel will lock. After completely stopping, turn off the engine and evacuate passengers. Make sure passengers are as far away as possible from the burning vehicle (at least 100 ft.) and road.
- Rail: If a fire occurs in or near a station, have passengers evacuate immediately while you notify the control center. If you are en route and far from a station, report the fire condition and await response from the control center in order to ensure that surrounding tracks are cleared for you to evacuate.





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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Severe Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms are very common and always involve lightning. They are sometimes associated with the related hazards of tornadoes, strong winds, hail, and flash floods. Be aware of the following when dealing with a thunderstorm-related emergency while on the job:

- A thunderstorm watch occurs when severe thunderstorms are likely.
- A thunderstorm warning indicates imminent danger to life and property for those in the path of the storm.
- Prepare for a power outage by locating flashlights, a battery-operated radio, and batteries.
- If a customer or fellow employee is struck by lightning, provide first aid immediately if you are trained to do so. The individual struck will not carry an electrical charge. If he/she is not breathing, perform resuscitation procedures to the best of your ability.

Transit Facilities:

- Consider any downed power lines as potentially deadly and dangerous—do not go near them. Report them immediately by calling 911.
- Do not handle any electrical equipment or telephones because lightning's electrical current can follow the wires. Avoid water faucets and sinks because metal pipes and water can transmit electricity.

Transit Vehicles:

- Stay inside the vehicle. Remember, you are much safer inside the vehicle than outside.
- Bus and Van: Pull the vehicle to the shoulder of the roadway and turn emergency flashers on until heavy rain subsides.
- Rail: Be observant for downed wires or fires and other issues with third rail, catenary, and transformers.



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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Floods

Floods are considered the most common of all natural disasters and occur throughout the United States. Floods can be caused, not only by rain-swollen rivers and streams, but also by broken dams, levees, or water mains. Property damage due to flooding totals over \$1 billion annually. Some floods occur rapidly, like flash floods, while others develop slowly. Keep the following points in mind when dealing with a flood emergency:

- Stay out of the water. Do not attempt to swim or wade to safety. Wait for the water to recede, or for rescue. Most deaths during floods occur from people walking or driving through flood waters. Floodwater hazards include:
 1. Environmental and biological dangers that may contaminate the water such as oil, gasoline, other hazardous chemicals, and raw sewage.
 2. Downed power lines can electrify water in flooded streets, and even in large puddles. Additionally, water collecting in your home—such as a flooded basement— can also become electrified and pose a serious danger.
 3. Strong currents and submerged debris may exist in the floodwaters.

Six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you must walk in a flooded area, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.

Transit Facilities:

- If you can do so safely, turn off electricity at the breaker before water enters your facility. If you did not get the electricity turned off before the water entered, do not turn it off. Get out of the water.
- Move valuables and emergency supplies to high interior areas of the facility.
- Wait for help.

Transit Vehicles:

- Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warning signs as rain clouds or heavy rain.
Bus and Van: If there is a possibility of flash flood, move immediately to higher ground.
- Bus and Van: Know of community evacuation routes. Use only routes recommended by local authorities.

- Bus and Van: Do not drive into flooded areas. A foot of water will float many vehicles. Two feet of water will wash away almost all vehicles. If flood waters begin to rise around your vehicle, abandon it and move to higher ground, if you can do so safely. You and your vehicle can be quickly swept away as floodwaters rise.
- Bus and Van: Recognize areas where floodwaters have receded, possibly weakening roads which could collapse under the weight of the vehicle.
Rail: Do not operate on a submerged right-of-way. If flooding is visible, stop operations and notify your control center.
- Rail: Be observant for potential damage to bridges and/or other parts of the right-of-way. If you notice something, bring train to a safe stop and notify the control center immediately.



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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Tornadoes

Tornadoes are generated from powerful thunderstorms and appear as rotating, funnel-shaped clouds that extends to the ground with winds that can reach 250 miles per hour and can strike with little or no warning. If you and your customers are caught in a tornado, understand and adhere to the following:

- A tornado watch is issued when tornadoes are possible in your area. Remain alert for approaching storms.
- A tornado warning is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. If a tornado warning is issued for your area and the sky becomes threatening, move to your pre-designated place of safety.
- Be aware of tornado danger signs, which can include dark sky, large hail, a large, low-flying cloud, and a loud roar similar to a train.
- Flying debris causes most tornado-related fatalities and injuries. Protect yourself from flying debris by crouching under sturdy furniture and/or wrapping yourself in blankets or coats for added protection.
- Be on the lookout for fallen power lines after the storm.

Transit Facilities:

- Move to a pre-designated shelter, preferably an underground structure such as a basement.
- If an underground shelter is not available, move to a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor of the building and get under a sturdy piece of furniture. Stairways are sturdy structures that are good to shelter under. Use arms and hands to protect your head and neck. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Stay away from and do not open windows.
- Stay away from building corners because they attract debris.
- Mobile structures, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
- You should leave a mobile structure and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building or a storm shelter.
- Avoid large open areas and places with wide-span roofs, such as auditoriums, cafeterias, or shopping malls.

Transit Vehicles:

- Bus and Van: In a vehicle, do not attempt to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas.

- Instead, leave the vehicle immediately and move yourself and your passengers to a safe shelter. The lowest floor of a sturdy nearby building or storm shelter would be best. Stay away from windows and open spaces.
- Bus and Van: If driving in open country, drive at a right angle away from the tornado's path. If you cannot avoid the tornado, get yourself and your passengers out of your vehicle. Have everyone lie flat in the nearest depression, such as a ditch, culvert, or ravine. Direct people to protect their head and stay low to the ground.
- Rail: Be aware of weather conditions conducive to tornadoes and be alert for situations where you see a tornado touch down. If you see a tornado touching down, notify your control center and follow their instructions.



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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Hurricanes

Hurricanes are a type of tropical cyclone, classified into five categories based on their wind speed, central pressure, and damage potential. Categories 3 and higher are considered major hurricanes. In the United States, all Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas are subject to hurricanes or tropical storms. Hurricanes can bring winds that exceed 155 miles per hour and can cause major damage to both coastlines and inland regions. They can also result in severe flooding from coastal surges and excess rain, in which case transit workers should regard the flood precautions and advice. If you and your customers are caught in a hurricane, understand and adhere to the following:

- A Hurricane Watch is issued when there is a threat of hurricane conditions within 24-36 hours.
- A Hurricane Warning is issued when hurricane conditions (winds of 74 miles per hour or greater or dangerously high water and rough seas) are expected in 24 hours or less.
- Heed warnings and mandatory evacuation orders. Remember, as a transit employee your job may be a vital part of the community's evacuation plan.
- If flooding occurs, follow flood guidelines.
- If excessive high winds persist, follow tornado guidelines.

Transit Facilities:

- Stay inside, away from windows, skylights, and glass doors.
- Avoid elevators.
- If power is lost, turn off/unplug major electrical devices to reduce power "surge" when electricity is restored.
- If in a mobile structure, check tie-downs and evacuate immediately.
- If officials indicate evacuation is necessary:
 1. Secure your facility by unplugging electrical devices and turning off appropriate utilities.
 2. Collect pre-assembled emergency supplies, extra clothing, blankets, and other items and bring to shelter.
 3. Lock up facility and leave.

Transit Vehicles:

- Be aware of community evacuation procedures and routes. If possible, stay away from coastal areas, riverbanks, and streams. Remain alert while operating your vehicle. Streets or tracks may fill with debris. Road and rail infrastructure may be weakened and could

distort or collapse.

- Do not drive or operate on flooded or barricaded roads or bridges. Closed roads are for your protection. As little as six inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle—two feet of water will carry most vehicles away.
- Stay away from downed power lines and do not walk through moving water.
- If officials indicate evacuation is necessary:
 1. Collect pre-assembled emergency supplies, extra clothing, blankets, and other items and bring to shelter.
 2. Leave as soon as possible. Avoid flooded roads and watch for washed-out bridges.



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What to Do in Specific Emergency Situations

Earthquakes

The breaking and shifting of rock beneath the earth's surface causes earthquakes. Some areas are at a much greater risk for earthquakes. Earthquakes can lead to building and bridge collapse and can result in fires, explosions, flooding, and landslides. If you and your customers are caught in an earthquake, adhere to the following:

- Be prepared for aftershocks. The aftershocks associated with earthquakes can also be damaging and may bring weakened structures down. Aftershocks can occur in the first hours, days, weeks, or even months after the earthquake.
- If you are outside and can do so safely, move into the open, away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires.

Transit Facilities:

- Stay inside.
- Take cover under a piece of heavy furniture, against an inside wall, or in a doorway.
- The most dangerous thing to do during the shaking of an earthquake is to try to leave the building because of falling objects.
- Help injured or trapped persons.

Transit Vehicles:

- Stay in vehicle.
- Move out from underneath bridges or other overhead structures.



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System Security Awareness

While it is important to be prepared for emergency situations resulting from severe weather conditions, natural disasters and other unavoidable accidents, some vigilance on your part can help to prevent situations caused or created by people. From small-scale situations aimed at individuals or small groups, such as vandalism or theft, to larger scale incidents including bomb threats or other terrorist activities, your awareness of your surroundings can help actively prevent these events. As a transit employee, your vigilance can protect your system, the surrounding community, and yourself. Awareness and observation of your surroundings can keep your transit system and all of its components—environment, assets, employees, and customers—free from intentional acts and accidental incidents causing injury and damage.

Prevention

Observe and report people, activities, and things that are out-of-place or out-of-the-ordinary:

- Follow policies and procedures
- Look for and report system security weaknesses
- Practice good housekeeping
- Conduct vehicle inspections

Awareness

During daily work routines, check garages, stations, depots, and terminal for:

Suspicious Activity

Suspicious activity is characterized by a combination of actions that appear strange, inconsistent, or out-of-the-ordinary for your work environment. Criminals and terrorists often shadow their targets and engage in surveillance before they attack. You will need to trust your instincts and your experience to determine what is suspicious.

Suspicious activity can be identified by considering:

- Where someone is (restricted area, hiding, loitering)
- When they are there (rush hour, off-peak hours, late at night)
- What they are doing (taking notes, watching)

Suspicious Objects

Transit systems deal with thousands of items left unattended or left in stations and on trains and vehicles each year. Although unattended packages are rarely linked to explosive devices, they all represent a potential threat and need to be dealt with systematically.

When you observe an item, remember to consider:

- What does the object look like (leaking, wires visible, warning note attached)?
- Where is the object located (hidden or out in the open)?

Suspicious Substances

Some chemical, biological, and radiological agents (CBR) may be visible while others can be colorless, odorless, and difficult to identify. The most important thing to remember is that victims will exhibit the symptoms of exposure, particularly to chemical agents. Suspicious substances, including CBR agents, may be identified by observing:

- Any unusual materials present (fine powder, residue, fog, mist, oily liquid or odor).
- Two or more people and animals having any unusual symptoms (coughing, choking, vomiting, fainting, unconsciousness).



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System Security Awareness

Response

Know what is going on, how to react, and whom to inform. When responding, it is important for you to remember to remain calm and follow agency protocols and procedures. Gather and report as much information as possible and maintain communication with customers and the control center. When necessary, enlist the help of other employees and customers and identify yourself to arriving responders in order to assist them as directed.



- **Gather Information on Threats and Incidents**

Make note of the exact location and type of threat or incident; safe access and exit routes; weather conditions; passenger information; and presence of suspicious activities, objects, or substances.

- **Report the Situation**

Immediately notify the proper authority, verify the accuracy of the information you are reporting, await direction, confirm the instructions received, and be sure to avoid, if possible, the use of radios or cell phones within 300 ft. of an incident involving explosive devices or suspected explosives.



- **Respond to Suspicious Activities**

If the person is in a restricted area, calmly approach the suspicious person and ask him/her for an ID card or badge, if you can help them, whom they are there to see, and/or if you can escort them out of the area. If you find a person threatening or dangerous, do not approach him/her and never attempt to hold or detain a person. As they leave, note their direction of travel, description of license plate, clothing, and personal characteristics.

- **Respond to Suspicious Objects**

Report a detailed description of the object and attempt to secure the area. Do not touch or move the object, or use a radio or cell phone within 300 ft. of the package if you suspect it is an explosive device. Await direction from your authority and do not re-enter the secure area.

- **Respond to Suspicious Substances**

Isolate, secure, and evacuate the area. Move people upwind and uphill away from the substance and if possible, shut down the HVAC system to avoid spreading the contamination. Do not, under any circumstances, touch, move, or cover the substance.

Self-Protection

Minimize harm to yourself while carefully fulfilling your duties and responsibilities to your best ability. Never forget the transit priorities when confronted with an abnormal situation:

- **Life Safety**—Protect yourself and others against exposure and injury. Incident Stabilization—Gather information, make notification, and await direction.
- **Property Conservation**—Protect the environment and assets (primarily a role for emergency responders).



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What to Do in Specific Security Situations

Explosions

Explosions may be caused by gas leaks, electrical malfunctions, or intentionally placed bombs. Historically, bombs are the weapon of choice for terrorists targeting transit systems. Bombs can be life threatening at the explosion point and surrounding areas due to blast pressure, heat, thermal effect, and flying objects. Explosions may also weaken or affect nearby structures and utilities that can in-turn be hazardous. In the event of an explosion, understand and adhere to the following:



- Take cover. If you anticipate or see a bright flash or hear the explosion, immediately get low or hide behind a solid object. This provides some protection from projectiles and shrapnel.
- Report the explosion as quickly and accurately as possible. This information can greatly help determine suitable countermeasures for emergency responders and agency response.
- Stay away from the damaged area.
- Be aware of the possibility of secondary explosions.
- If trapped by the explosion, remain calm and wait for rescuers. Stay still to prevent stirring up dust and further trapping or injuring yourself. Speak as little as possible to avoid inhaling dust until you are able to communicate with a rescue worker. Make noise by tapping on something to signal rescue workers of your presence.



Transit Facilities:

- Assess your surroundings and evaluate the situation to determine if Emergency Medical Services are required.
- If Emergency Medical Services are essential, follow agency procedures for acquiring further assistance.
- In the meantime, administer first aid if qualified to do so and if found necessary. Remember, only move seriously injured persons if immediate danger threatens further injuries.
- Inspect your facility for damage. Also, check for and be aware of additional environmental dangers such as leaking gas, chemical spills, fires, or downed wires near your facility.

Transit Vehicles:

- Stay in the vehicle. It can provide protection from the initial and secondary explosions.
- Contact your agency to report the incident or to further understand if and how the explosion will impact your route and service schedule.

- Keep communications open for further instructions.
- If a power line falls on the vehicle, you and your customers are at risk of electrical shock. Remain inside until trained personnel respond and remove the wire.
- If the emergency could impact the physical stability of the roadway or rail right- of-ways, avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs, and other hazards.
- Bus and Van: If there is an explosion or other factor that makes it difficult to control the vehicle, do your best to pull over, stop the vehicle, and set the parking brake.



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What to Do in Specific Security Situations

Hazardous Materials

Accidents or attacks involving toxic substances, industrial chemicals, or chemical, biological, or radiological (CBR) weapons can have catastrophic consequences and require large scale evacuations. In the event of an accident involving the release of hazardous materials, understand and adhere to the following:

- Follow the advice of local emergency officials.
- If you are near the scene of a hazardous substance release, immediately and safely move away from the area to minimize exposure. Try to stay upstream, uphill, and upwind of the material in an attempt to avoid or minimize exposure.
- If you were in the contaminated area and directly exposed to the released substance, shed your clothes and rinse with cold water once you are safely away. Nearly 80 percent of the contaminate can be removed in this manner. Discard clothes in a trash bag or other sealable container.
- Shield yourself from the hazardous substance by blocking the agent from your body's routes of exposure if you are unable to relocate away from the contaminated area. Routes of exposure include ingestion, inhalation, injection, and absorption. Structures that may be sealed, like buildings or a transit vehicle, may prove to be good barriers to the substance, if evacuations are not possible.
- Turning off ventilation, including air conditioners, vents, and fans, can reduce the spread of the harmful substance. HVAC system protocols during hazardous materials incidents will depend upon your agency's policies and infrastructure.
- Be patient and remain calm. An increased breathing rate will cause you to inhale more of the contaminate.

Transit Facilities:

- If a hazardous materials release is suspected outside the facility and you can not quickly evacuate the area, go inside and turn off the HVAC system. Close and seal windows and doors, proceed to an interior room, and try to report it as soon as possible.
- If a hazardous materials release or attack is suspected inside the facility, evacuate and move as far away as possible. In the event that you cannot evacuate and are in a multi-level building, proceed to a higher floor. Many toxic substances, including most chemical weapons, are heavier than air and will collect in lower or below grade-level floors.
- Do not light matches or candles or turn on electrical switches in the event that the substance is flammable.

Transit Vehicles:

- Drivers and operators should confirm with their employers what they are expected to do with their vehicles and customers in the event of a hazardous materials incident or terrorist attack.
- Bus and Van: Drivers should stop short of, or detour around, suspected incidents or contaminated areas.
- Rail: Rail operators are confined to fixed routes. The best immediate reaction may be to shelter-in-place and wait for further assistance and instruction.
- By sheltering-in-place, you and your passengers use the vehicle to reduce or block exposure to the substance or CBR agent. Close windows and doors and minimize air movement by turning off the vehicle's HVAC system.
- If the substance is discovered to be on the vehicle, evacuate passengers and relocate them uphill and upwind.

Trucks and trains transporting hazardous materials are commonplace on the roads and railways. Operators and drivers should be aware of the signs of a potential hazardous material release. These can include the presence of a spill or vapor cloud coming from a tank truck, rail tank car, or storage tank, or the observation of sick or injured people suffering similar symptoms from exposure.

Another way in which hazardous materials can be identified is the presence of warning labels and placards. The most common of these are ten-inch, diamond-shaped placards found on trucks and rail cars carrying hazardous materials. Regulated by the Department of Transportation, shipments of hazardous materials are divided into nine major classifications and must be placarded accordingly.

For most materials, in the event of a small leak or spill, it is recommended that the area be isolated by at least 150 feet in all directions, while trying to stay upwind. If the spill involves a trailer or rail car that is on fire, evacuation of at least a mile in all directions is usually recommended.

Most of these chemicals are perfectly safe and stable in the appropriate containers. When released and/or exposed to heat, direct flame, or incompatible materials, they can explode, catch fire, or release toxic or poisonous vapors and liquids. All of these events can lead to serious, perhaps life-altering injuries or fatalities. Protect yourself by avoiding contact with or exposure to these substances and report the situation as soon as possible.



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AT HOME

At-Home Preparedness

Being prepared at home will help to minimize the damage to your home and/or injury to your family regardless of your presence. Should an emergency occur while you are at work, would you be able to answer the following questions regarding your home and family? Asking and answering these sample questions and others similar to them is critical to proper emergency planning for you and your family.



- “Who would be available to take responsibility for my children?”
- “How would my elderly parents reach safety?”
- “Are emergency supplies prepared and available for my family’s use at home?”
- “Is my family aware of the best way to reach me at work in the event of an emergency situation?”
- “Where would my family convene if they were unable to reach our home?”

Prepare for At Home Emergencies

The following information will help you plan how to protect your family if disaster strikes and you are at work. We cannot develop the plan for you, as each individual must consider a host of different factors in creating his/her distinct plan. However, we can make the process less burdensome and overwhelming by providing you with checklists to utilize when developing your plan.

Following your review of the lists provided on the following pages, you may think of additional questions you need to ask and answer in order to develop your personal emergency preparedness plan. Take some time and share those thoughts with your colleagues, as they, too, may benefit from your observations and insights.



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What to Do Before an Emergency

- Develop a household emergency communications plan.
 1. Prepare a list of important local phone numbers (personal and emergency) and place near a household telephone. Be sure all household members and anyone who may be in the home (caretaker, neighbor) are aware of, and have easy access to the list.
 2. Household members should have one another's contact information with them at all times (e.g., parent should have school number, child should have parents' work, pager, and cell numbers).
 3. Select an out-of-town contact. In the event of a disaster, all household members can call or email to check on one another through this mutual contact.
- Agree on two alternative meeting places in the event you cannot reach your home safely; One near your home and one in another neighborhood. Familiarize children with the selected locations. Consider family pets when determining the meeting places.
- Review and update your home emergency plan on a regular basis. Remind all household members of the home emergency plan and inform them of any changes in the plan and their role in its successful implementation.
- Assemble an Emergency Supplies Kit for your home. It is important that all household members are aware of its location and have access to the kit.
- See the "At Home" Kit Checklist included in these materials (page 27) for suggested contents.
- Teach each household member how to use the fire extinguisher and how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity.

Things to Consider Before an Emergency

Should an emergency event occur while you are at work, you need to ask yourself the following questions:

With regard to your home...

- Am I aware of the types of natural disasters that could strike my community and have I prepared my home accordingly?
- Are all who reside in my home aware of our community's warning signals and what to do if they hear them?
- Does everyone know which media sources (radio stations, television channels, internet sites) will provide emergency information for our area?
- Do we have adequate insurance coverage (e.g., flood, earthquake)?
- Do we have a working flood alarm (if relevant)?
- Is our sump pump working?

- Is our home winterized (e.g., walls insulated properly, storm windows installed, doors and windows caulked and weather-stripped)? Do we have an alternate heat source and an adequate supply of heating fuel?
- Do we have working smoke detectors on each level of our home that are tested and dusted monthly, and have the batteries been replaced in the past six months?
- Is there a working A-B-C type fire extinguisher in my home that has been tested and recharged annually according to the manufacturer's instructions? Do my household members know where the device is located and how to use it?
- Have we determined a fire evacuation plan from our home that all inhabitants are familiar with and can perform? Have we determined two ways out of each room in our home? Have we practiced the evacuation plan at least once in the past six months?
- Do my older children or caretakers who may be in the home during an emergency know how and when to turn off the utilities (e.g., water, gas, and electricity)?
- Have I made arrangements with a neighbor to check on my home in the event an emergency occurs while I am at work and cannot be reached? Is there a disaster supplies kit in my home that all family members/caretakers are aware of and have easy access to?



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What to Do Before an Emergency

If You Have Children

Should an emergency event occur while you are at work, you need to ask yourself the following questions:

- Am I generally aware of my child's weekday schedule and whereabouts (e.g., school, after-school activities, play dates)?
- What is my child's school/day care facility emergency response plan? How do they plan to communicate with parents/guardians in the event of an emergency?
- Am I aware of the school's planned destination if evacuation is necessary?
- Do I have ready access to the school's phone number available to me at work?
- Does my child, the school, and designated caregiver have my contact information and know the best way to reach me in the event of an emergency?
- Have I designated an authorized caregiver to pick up my child and take him/her to safety if I am unable to reach school and care for him/her until I am available? Does the school have current designated caregiver contact information? Is my child aware of the designated caregiver?
- If my child is at an after-school or weekend activity when an emergency event occurs, have I arranged for a designated person to pick up my child and take him/her to safety until I am available? Does my child have that person's contact number with him/her at all times and know how to contact the individual if I am at work?
- If my child cannot reach me, have we discussed and determined whom he/she should contact for help if he/she is at home alone when an emergency event occurs (aside from emergency personnel)?
- Has our family discussed and determined a meeting place(s) where we can all convene in the event of an emergency situation when we cannot reach our home? Is one of our meeting places close to home in case my child has to walk there?
- Has our family discussed and determined an out-of-town contact whom we can all call or email in the event of a disaster situation where we are all separated, so that we can check on one another? Do I have the number with me at work?



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What to Do Before an Emergency

If You Care for an Elderly Person or Other Dependent Relative

- Does he/she have my work contact information and know the best way to reach me in the event of an emergency? If he/she has a caretaker or attends a day care facility, do they have my work contact information?
- Have I made the caretaker aware of any job-related contact restrictions I may have as a transit employee?
- Do I have ready access to the caretaker's phone number if care is not provided at my home?
- If he/she attends a day care facility, do I know their emergency response plan and the facility's planned destination if evacuation is necessary? How do they plan to communicate with guardians in the event of an emergency?
- Have I specified a designated person to pick up my elderly or other dependent relative from his/her care facility in the event of an emergency situation and take him/her to safety until I am available?
- How will he/she reach our determined family meeting place(s) or shelter in the event of an emergency situation where evacuation from the home is necessary?
- Have I made arrangements with a neighbor or caretaker to help my elderly or other dependent relative evacuate?
- Are my local emergency shelters handicapped accessible?
- Does he/she have our determined out-of-town contact's information?
- Does he/she have a small bag prepared and easily accessible with a supply of any necessary medications?



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What to Do Before an Emergency

If You Have Pets

- Have I made an arrangement with a neighbor to check on our pet(s) at home in an emergency situation when I am at work?
- Does our family disaster supplies kit have food/water for our pet(s)?
- Are my children/other family members capable of handling our pet(s) in their effort to bring them to safety if home evacuation is necessary? If not, who will help them to do so?
- Does the emergency meeting place(s) our family selected allow pets? If not, where will my family bring our pet(s)?
- If my family is sent to the local area emergency shelter, do they allow pets? If not, where will my family bring our pet(s)?

In Conclusion

As you've seen throughout this Emergency Preparedness Guide, developing a personal emergency preparedness plan for use at your workplace—and another for your family and home—is essential. Keeping your plans up to date is equally important. If you do not review your plans on a regular basis and adjust them to meet your ever-changing circumstances, your plans will fail to meet their prime intention—helping you and your family remain safe during an emergency situation.



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Emergency Supplies Kits

There are several items you should consider stocking for either your work and/or home emergency supply kits: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items. For each kit be sure to:

- Adjust your kit (work and home) based on yours and your family's needs.
- Store your work kit in a convenient place. Store your home kit in an accessible place known to all family members.
- Keep a smaller version of the supplies kit in the trunk of your car.
- Evaluate and re-supply your kit regularly. Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year (replace batteries, update clothes, etc.).
- Change your stored water and stored food supply every six months so it stays fresh. For better preservation, keep items in airtight bags.
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.
- Do not include candles, weapons, toxic chemicals such as household cleaners, or controlled drugs (unless prescribed by a physician).

Checklists

[On the Job Emergency Supplies Kit Checklist](#)   [html](#) [pdf](#)

[At Home Emergency Supplies Kit Checklist](#)   [html](#) [pdf](#)



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On the Job Emergency Supplies Kit Checklist

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES KITS

There are several items you should consider stocking for either your work and/or home emergency supply kits: **water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items.** For each kit be sure to:

- ☐ Adjust your kit (work and home) based on yours and your family's needs.
- ☐ Store your work kit in a convenient place. Store your home kit in an accessible place known to all family members.
- ☐ Keep a smaller version of the supplies kit in the trunk of your car.
- ☐ Evaluate and re-supply your kit regularly. Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year (replace batteries, update clothes, etc.). Change your stored water and stored food supply every six months so it stays fresh. For better preservation, keep items in airtight bags.
- ☐ Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.
- ☐ Do not include candles, weapons, toxic chemicals such as household cleaners, or controlled drugs (unless prescribed by a physician).

ON-THE-JOB EMERGENCY SUPPLIES KIT CHECKLIST

Your job as a transit employee encompasses a variety of duties and a unique responsibility for others. It is a good idea to keep the items listed below readily available in case of an emergency. These items can be stowed in your locker or personal vehicle. You can also carry the bare minimum of these items in a small shoulder bag.

Water

Keep at least one gallon of water available, or more if you are on medications that require water or that increase thirst. Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles.

Food

Keep enough non-perishable food to sustain you for at least one day (three meals). Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. The following items are suggested:

- ☐ Ready-to-eat canned meals, meats, fruits, and vegetables.
- ☐ Canned juices.
- ☐ High-energy foods (granola bars, energy bars, etc.)
- ☐ Vitamins

First Aid Supplies

If your employer does not provide first aid supplies, have the following essentials:

- ☐ (20) adhesive bandages, various sizes
- ☐ (1) 5" x 9" sterile dressing
- ☐ (1) conforming roller gauze bandage
- ☐ (2) triangular bandages
- ☐ (2) 3" x 3" sterile gauze pads
- ☐ (2) 4" x 4" sterile gauze pads
- ☐ (1) roll 3" cohesive bandage
- ☐ (2) germicidal hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- ☐ (6) antiseptic wipes
- ☐ (2) pair large medical grade non-latex gloves
- ☐ Adhesive tape, 2" width
- ☐ Anti-bacterial ointment
- ☐ Cold pack
- ☐ Scissors (small, personal)
- ☐ Tweezers
- ☐ CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield

Tools and Emergency Supplies

- ☐ Emergency Preparedness Guide
- ☐ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ☐ Battery-powered radio with extra batteries
- ☐ Paper plates and cups, plastic utensils
- ☐ Non-electric can opener
- ☐ Personal hygiene items, including toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, brush, soap, contact lens supplies, and feminine supplies
- ☐ Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- ☐ If you wear glasses, keep an extra pair with your workplace disaster supplies
- ☐ Emergency "space" blanket (Mylar)

Clothing and Bedding

- ☐ A complete change of clothing and footwear, including a long-sleeved shirt and long pants
- ☐ Jacket
- ☐ Blanket
- ☐ Sturdy, closed-toed shoes or boots

Special Items

- ☐ Non-Prescription Medicine—Include pain relievers, stomach remedies, and other medicine you use regularly.
- ☐ Prescribed Medicine—Keep at least a three-day supply of these medications at your workplace. Consult with your physician or pharmacist on how these medications should be stored, and your employer about storage concerns.



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AT-HOME EMERGENCY SUPPLIES KIT CHECKLIST

Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container. Possible containers include a large, covered trash container, a camping backpack, or a duffel bag.

Water

☐ Store one gallon of water per person per day and keep at least a three-day supply of water per person. Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. *A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and those who are ill will need more. Store any additional water needed for food preparation and hygiene.*

Food

Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight. Include a selection of the following foods in your kit:

- ☐ Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables
- ☐ Canned juices
- ☐ Staples (salt, sugar, pepper, spices, etc.)
- ☐ High-energy foods
- ☐ Comfort/stress foods
- ☐ Food for infants
- ☐ Vitamins

First Aid Kit

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car.

- ☐ (20) adhesive bandages, various sizes
- ☐ (1) 5" x 9" sterile dressing
- ☐ (1) conforming roller gauze bandage
- ☐ (2) triangular bandages
- ☐ (2) 3" x 3" sterile gauze pads
- ☐ (2) 4" x 4" sterile gauze pads
- ☐ (1) roll 3" cohesive bandage
- ☐ (2) germicidal hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- ☐ (6) antiseptic wipes
- ☐ (2) pair large medical grade non-latex gloves
- ☐ Adhesive tape, 2" width
- ☐ Anti-bacterial ointment

- ☐ Cold pack
- ☐ Scissors (small, personal)
- ☐ Tweezers
- ☐ CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield

Tools and Supplies

- ☐ Mess kits, or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils
- ☐ Emergency preparedness manual
- ☐ Battery-operated radio and extra batteries
- ☐ NOAA weather radio (broadcast warnings and post-event information for all types of disasters — natural and technological)
- ☐ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ☐ Credit card and cash or traveler's checks, change
- ☐ Non-electric can opener, utility knife
- ☐ Fire extinguisher: small canister ABC type
- ☐ Dust mask
- ☐ Tube tent
- ☐ Pliers
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Matches in a waterproof container
- ☐ Aluminum foil
- ☐ Plastic storage containers
- ☐ Signal flare
- ☐ Pencil/pen, paper/pads
- ☐ Needles, thread
- ☐ Medicine dropper
- ☐ Shut-off wrench to turn off household gas and water
- ☐ Whistle
- ☐ Plastic sheeting
- ☐ Map of the area (for locating shelters)

Clothing and Bedding

Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person.

- ☐ Sturdy shoes or work boots
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Blankets or sleeping bags
- ☐ Hat and gloves
- ☐ Thermal underwear
- ☐ Sunglasses

Special Items

Remember family members with special requirements, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons:

For Baby

- ☐ Formula
- ☐ Diapers
- ☐ Bottles
- ☐ Powdered milk
- ☐ Medications

For Adults

- ☐ Heart and high blood pressure medication
- ☐ Insulin
- ☐ Prescription drugs
- ☐ Denture needs
- ☐ Contact lenses and supplies
- ☐ Extra eye glasses
- ☐ Extra set of car keys

Important Family Documents

- ☐ Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container:
- ☐ Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- ☐ Passports, social security cards, driver's license, immunization records
- ☐ Bank account numbers
- ☐ Credit card account numbers and companies
- ☐ Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- ☐ Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

Non-Prescription Drugs

- ☐ Aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever
- ☐ Anti-diarrhea medication
- ☐ Antacid (for stomach upset)
- ☐ Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center)
- ☐ Laxative
- ☐ Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

Sanitation

- ☐ Toilet paper, towelettes
- ☐ Soap, liquid detergent
- ☐ Feminine supplies
- ☐ Personal hygiene items
- ☐ Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- ☐ Plastic bucket with tight lid
- ☐ Disinfectant
- ☐ Household chlorine bleach

Entertainment

- ☐ Games
- ☐ Books